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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2180  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2045  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2616  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 001331

SENSITIVE  
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STATE FOR SCA/CEN  
COMMERCE FOR PDYCK/DSTARKS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/01/2018

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SUBJECT: TURKMENAIR CHAIRMAN TO COMMERCE DAS DYCK: WE,LL  
GIVE BOEING A GOOD DEAL IF THEY OFFER US ONE

REF: ASHGABAT 1305

Classified By: Charge Sylvia Reed Curran for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) During his September 29-30 visit to Turkmenistan, Commerce Department Deputy Assistant Secretary Paul Dyck met with the Chairman of the National Civil Aviation Service Gurbanyaz Tirkishov to discuss Boeing,s activities in Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan Airlines, fleet is almost exclusively Boeing aircraft, reflecting Boeing,s early entry into the market. Chairman Tirkishov underscored that Boeing has been a long-standing partner of Turkmenistan and its aircraft enable the national airline to fly to 13 cities in 11 different countries (including the UK and Germany) with no safety concerns.

¶2. (SBU) Chairman Tirkishov went on to raise two details that have recently soured their relationship. The first involves not Boeing, but the subcontractor who handles their interior aircraft design, Gore Design. The Chairman complained that Turkmenistan Airlines built a relationship with Boeing, not with this design company, and that the design company had been difficult to work with. Gore Design has been pushing to finalize the contract, and went so far as to send a letter of complaint via Turkmenistan's Embassy in Washington protesting delays on the Turkmen side. The Chairman added that when they complained to Boeing, Boeing disavowed any relationship with Gore Design, even though, according to Tirkishov, it was Boeing who "foisted" the company on Turkmenistan Airlines.

¶3. (SBU) The second, and more significant issue for Chairman Tirkishov, is that Boeing has not provided in-country training opportunities and equipment for the pilots and technicians. The Chairman claimed that they raised this issue in 2006, and that they would like Boeing to recognize their long-standing cooperation by making an offer to provide equipment and other training here. This is especially significant since on September 25, President Berdimuhamedov "gravely reprimanded8 Tirkishov for not providing adequate training for aircraft technicians (reftel). The Chairman noted that Bombardier had offered them a very good deal, and

included an offer to improve infrastructure in the more remote regions of the country. He closed by stating that they await Boeing's response in October and hope that Boeing includes clear incentives for Turkmenistan Airlines to continue their relationship. DAS Dyck noted Boeing's desire to sell 10 737 aircraft to Turkmenistan Airlines. (COMMENT: Tirkishov did not hesitate to name drop Airbus throughout the meeting, noting that they are reviewing Airbus' proposal to sell planes to replace the short haul domestic fleet. END COMMENT.)

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: Tirkishov's statement regarding the reasons for Berdimuhamedov's reprimand are not in line with what the Boeing rep told us. The Boeing rep laid the blame for shortcomings on the Turkmen and mentioned nothing about any request for training from Boeing that would help address those shortcomings. The Turkmen routinely request that companies provide training for local personnel to help address their serious human capacity problem. We have no reason to doubt that Turkmenistan Airlines made similar requests to Boeing. END COMMENT.

¶5. DAS Dyck cleared this cable.  
CURRAN